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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KNNP](#) [CH](#) [KN](#)
SUBJECT: PRC ACADEMICS ON NORTH KOREA

REF: FBIS JPP20070125326002

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Daniel Shields.
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

11. (S) In three recent conversations on North Korea, Chinese counterparts were consistent in their frustration with the DPRK and their contempt for Kim Jong-Il. One scholar dismissed recent rumors that Kim had been detained by the North Korean military but hinted that the DPRK leader may be suffering from "exhaustion." End Summary.

Consistent Views on North Korea

12. (S) The North Korean issue is a hot topic among Chinese scholars, particularly as local media here speculate about the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. Three of the Embassy's regular contacts commented recently on North Korea on the margins of discussions devoted largely to other subjects. Each was explicit in expressing frustration about Kim Jong-Il and the North Korean regime.

Contempt for Kim Jong-Il

13. (S) The North Korean nuclear problem will never be solved as long as the "evil" Kim Jong-Il is in charge, declared Zhang Xiantang (protect), a senior editor at the State Council Development Research Center paper China Economic Times. Separately, China Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) scholar Dong Lisheng (protect) told poloff that the majority of Chinese people "strongly oppose" Kim Jong-Il and the North Korean regime and are extremely suspicious of Pyongyang's intentions. The Vietnam experience, whereby a "brotherly" communist regime on China's border later became a bitter enemy, colors Chinese views of North Korea. Dong said he would not be surprised to see a more serious deterioration in China-DPRK relations at some point in the future. China Party School scholar Qin Zhilai (protect) separately echoed these criticisms, stating that only Kim's death is likely to solve the nuclear problem and improve the plight of the North Korean people.

Kim Jong-Il Rumors

14. (S) Qin also commented on recent rumors that Kim Jong-Il had been detained by DPRK military forces (see Ref A), saying the reports were "absolutely ludicrous." Kim is in "total control" and a "master" at manipulating others, Qin stated. Nevertheless, it is not totally out of the question that Kim Jong-Il might "naturally" disappear from the scene, Qin asserted, repeatedly emphasizing how "tired" Kim must be and speculating about the tremendous "pressure" he is under.

When asked by poloff whether he was saying that Kim Jong-Il is sick, Qin laughed and said, "exhaustion is one form of sickness, is it not?" (Comment: Qin is not a North Korean expert per se, but may have access to some PRC official reporting on Kim Jong-Il, given his position at the Central Party School's Institute of International Strategy. End comment.)

RANDT